

Message Text

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S E C R E T KATHMANDU 3260

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, PFOR, NP, US

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS SMUGGLING

REF: KATHMANDU 2923

1. FOREIGN MINISTER KARKI ASKED ME TO CALL ON HIM ON AUGUST 2. ACTING DCM ERICKSEN ACCOMPANIED ME; JOINT SECRETARY BHATT WAS ALSO PRESENT. AFTER KARKI HAD DISCUSSED POSSIBLE USE OF GURKHAS IN A PERMANENT UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE AND THE CURRENT STATUS OF GON MOVES AGAINST THE KHAMPAS (SEPTELS) , HE REVERTED TO THE QUESTION OF NEPAL'S DIPLOMATIC POUCHES IN RELATION TO DRUG TRAFFICKING WHICH I HAD RAISED WITH HIM ON JULY 17 (REFTEL).

2. THE FONMIN SAID THAT FOLLOWING OUR EARLIER CONVERSATION HE HAD CALLED FOR A COMPLETE REVIEW OF THE SITUATION IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. NOTHING HAD BEEN FOUND WRONG, KARKI SAID, BUT HE HAD GIVEN FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS ON TIGHTENING UP ON CONTROL OF WHAT WENT INTO NEPALESE DIPLOMATIC POUCHES. HE COULD ASSURE US THAT THERE WOULD BE NO ABUSE OF THE POUCHES FOR ILLICIT DRUG ACTIVITIES. IF INFORMATION CAME TO OUR ATTENTION ABOUT SUCH ABUSES, HE WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE IT. I THANKED HIM AND TOLD HIM I WOULD INFORM WASHINGTON.

3. KARKI SAID HE HAD REPORTED OUR PREVIOUS CONVERSATION FULLY TO HIS MAJESTY ON BOTH POINTS, I.E., THE DIPLOMATIC POUCH ISSUE AND THE PENDING NARCOTICS LEGISLATION. HE THEN SAID WOMEWAT

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INDIRECTLY, BUT CLEARLY ENOUGH, THAT PERHAPS THE TWO DISCUSSIONS

WITH HIM WOULD MAKE AN AUDIENCE WITH HIS MAJESTY UNNECESSARY. I MADE CLEAR TO HIM, AND WE SUBSEQUENTLY UNDERSCORED THIS WITH BHATT, THAT MY REQUEST FOR AN AUDIENCE WITH HIS MAJESTY WAS ON THE BASIS OF INSTRUCTIONS FROM MY GOVERNMENT AND STILL STOOD.

4. ON THE PROSPECTS FOR NARCOTICS LEGISLATION, THE FONMIN INSISTED THAT THE GON WOULD GO THROUGH WITH ITS COMMITMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT, BUT DWELT AT SOME LENGTH ALONG FAMILIAR LINES ON THE PROBLEM OF FARMERS IN THE HILLS WHO WOULD NEED SUBSTITUTE MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD. I STRESSED WITH HIM THE IMPORTANCE OF ACROSS-THE-BOARD CONTROLS ON NARCOTICS, NOTING THE PRESENTLY WEAK LEGISLATIVE BASE FOR ENFORCEMENT ACTION IN NEPAL. I FOUND HIM NOT WELL INFORMED ON HASH OIL AND THE RECENT UPSURGE OF THIS SUBSTANCE IN DRUG TRAFFICKING. I ACCORDINGLY TOOK OCCASION TO DRAW HIS ATTENTION TO A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC CASES, BASED ON DEA INFORMATION, IN WHICH HASH OIL OF NEPALESE ORIGIN HAD REACHED THE U.S. OR WAS INTERCEPTED ENROUTE. IT WAS CLEARLY DIFFICULT FOR KARKI TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT NEPAL COULD BE A SOURCE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT OF HASH OIL.

5. COMMENT: THE DEMARCHE WE HAVE MADE HERE TO GON AND LAINGEN'S APPROACH TO AMBASSADOR KHANAL ON ABUSE OF THE DIPLOMATIC POUCH AND DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGES FOR ILLICIT DRUG PURPOSES HAVE APPARENTLY SHAKEN THE NEPALESE A GOOD BIT. THERE IS ALSO AN ELEMENT OF NERVOUSNESS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY REACTION. THEY ARE NOT SURE HOW MUCH WE KNOW OR HOW MUCH I MIGHT SAY TO THE KING, WHICH MAY ACCOUNT FOR KARKI'S EVIDENT HOPE THAT I WOULD FIND A MEETING WITH HIS MAJESTY NO LONGER NECESSARY.

6. SUBSEQUENT TO THE FOREGOING, CHIRAN THAPA, HIS MAJESTY'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER, TOLD ME ON AUGUST 9 THAT HIS MAJESTY WOULD BE GLAD TO RECEIVE ME. THAPA SAID THAT THE KING NORMALLY DOES NOT DEAL WITH NARCOTICS AND THAT WAS WHY DISCUSSIONS WERE ARRANGED WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER. HE ASKED WHETHER THERE WERE OTHER QUESTIONS THAT I WISHED TO DISCUSS WITH HIS MAJESTY AS WELL, TO WHICH I RESPONDED THAT I WOULD WELCOME A TOUR D' HORIZON WITH HIS MAJESTY ON A NUMBER OF TOPICS OF COMMON INTEREST, INCLUDING SOME ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT IN NEPAL AND VARIOUS ISSUES OF MAJOR WORLD CONCERN. CHIRAN THAPA RESPONDED AFFIRMATIVELY TO THIS, SAYING THAT HIS MAJESTY HAD ENJOYED THE DISCUSSION

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DURING DINNER AT THE EMBASSY RESIDENCE ON JUNE 19 AND WOULD LOOK FORWARD TO A RENEWAL OF THAT CONVERSATION. THAPA SAID THAT HE WOULD ADVISE ME OF THE TIME OF THE AUDIENCE WITH HIS MAJESTY, BUT THAT IT PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE FOR A WEEK OR 10 DAYS.
CARGO

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NNN

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